

# **THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH DAY TOWARDS STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL AT THE EIGHTH GRADERS**

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## **Abstract**

This research was carried out in order to find out what the influence of English Day towards students' speaking skill of the eighth graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu. This research applied descriptive research design. The research subjects was the eighth graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu. The number was 33 students. The data of the research were collected by carrying out an interview, questionnaire and documentation. The study indicated that the students have positive attitudes towards the role of English Day in developing their speaking skill. This can be seen from the result of interview. The result of the questionnaire also suggested that there were 60 % students who strongly agreed that English day improves their English particularly on their speaking skill and 51.51% students strongly agree that English Day motivates the students to speak English. Statistical analysis indicated students' English ability had improved. In psychomotoric domain, there were only 24.24% students who can reach the score on 3.50 while in the second semester there were 63.63% students who can reach the score on 3.50. In cognitive domain, in the first semester, there were 36.36% students who can reach the score on 3.40 while in second semester there were 81.81% students who can reach 3.40. English day also open their mind that learning English is fun and enjoyable, has big expectations towards English day for being one of their English learning media legally. The researcher concluded that English day is very effective and innovative in facilitating the students to have a new way in learning English.

**Key words:** Influence; English Day; Speaking skill.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Speaking is one of English language skills, which plays an important role for human beings. A person delivers and receives messages through speaking. In speaking especially in English, people must have good pronunciation and master the vocabulary in order to make the listeners understand what the speaker means and delivers his or her ideas. Most people in the

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world use spoken language rather than written language. Cameron (2001:40) argues, “Speaking is the active use of language to express meanings hence, other people can make sense of them”.

Speaking is one of the language skills that is very important in social life because we ask questions, give responses and make requests through speaking. In short, speaking activities dominate our language behavior. That is why, if speaking ability is so crucial in human communication, then the primary aim of any language teaching has to enable students to speak the language. It means that the teacher should give priority to speaking exercises in the process of teaching and learning the language. Speaking is a way for someone to do an interaction with one another. When students want to transfer messages, it means they may use spoken language. Spoken language has advantages such as, students may listen the voice directly and can get the message as soon as possible. The purpose of speaking is to make listener easy to understand. However, it is difficult for students to use English if they rarely practice to speak it. However, the students have no self-confidence to use English in spoken language.

Students have difficulties in learning English especially on speaking subject. It happens because some reasons such as students’ background, goals, ability, and interest. The teacher’s creativity is needed to create an interesting class, with the use of appropriate technique or method to make students enjoy studying English. According to Arends (2007: 25):

Teacher needs many approaches to meet their goals with a diverse population of students. A single approach or method is no longer adequate. With sufficient choices, teacher can select the approach that best achieves a particular class of students, or the models that can be used to promote the students motivation, involvement and achievement.

The above statement reveals that having a great motivation can attract the students to learn English. To achieve this goal successfully, the teacher must understand what the students’ needs in order to produce better learning. Teacher technique determines students’ motivation to study and may increase students’ self-confidence, and brave to speak. There are some instruments that teacher may use to improve students speaking skill. Practice will make students be accustomed to speak English without worrying. In addition, students’ problems are not only from the classroom environment but also from the students themselves. The reality we often see is that many students master the theory better than practice. For example, in speaking, they may have the knowledge of how to speak, but in practice, they find difficulties. They lack self-confidence. To support the students in learning English, the teachers can use some

instruments in order to make them be more interested especially in learning speaking.

One of techniques that teacher can use to make student get used to speak English is to promote English day. Through English day, students will enjoy speaking English that improves students' ability and their self-confidence. Students will be more active and English day makes them get used to speak English. English day has been implemented in some schools and universities. Every school has different purpose in applying this English day.

The study about English day has been written previously by some writers. However, each study has its own goals, roles, and limitations. The comparison of related studies with the recent study is provided below:

Tanrin (2008) had done his research in SDN 4 Sukarsari Tangerang. English day has been implemented in this school for four years. English day has been implemented in order to improve students' speaking skill and make students dare to speak English. In English day, students performed some performances by using English such as, drama, poetry, singing and speech, it was held every Saturday and students were guided by some English teachers. Through his research he found that the implementation of English day at this school can improve students' speaking skill. Students communicate by using English with their friends at school environment, but students are able to speak in short conversation only.

In improving students' speaking skill, students have to involve themselves in activity which can improve their speaking skill. The researcher assumes that English activity can improve students speaking skill if the students involve themselves. English day is one of activity which gives big chance to the students to be more active in speaking. English day separated students from formal and informal situation which make students easier to improve their competence in vocabulary, pronunciation, or speaking.

Based on the observation, students of SMP Al-Azhar Palu get difficulty in expressing their ideas or opinions by using English. Students are not being able to speak English in the classroom due to having low motivation to practice English, having lack of vocabulary, being nervous and incorrect pronunciation. For example: when the teacher gives the students materials and opportunities to ask questions, they only keep silent. They actually knew what they want to say but they do not know how to say that in English. To face this condition, the English teachers of SMP Al-Azhar Palu decided to apply English day to the students. Moreover, the researcher chose SMP Al-Azhar Palu as an object of her research and chose the

eight graders because that class has applied English day since one year. Hence, the researcher wanted to know what is the influence of English day towards students' speaking skill of the eighth graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu.

English day has good and bad influence to the students achievement in speaking skill so that is why, the researcher is interested in conducting her research on English Day because she would like to find out the influence of English Day towards students' speaking skill. Based on that reason, the researcher entitled her research "The Influence of English Day towards Students' Speaking Skill of The Eighth Graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu. The research question was formulated in the following lines "*What is the influence of English day towards students' speaking skill of the eighth graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu?*" Based on the problem statement above, the researcher accomplished the research objective in order to find out the influence of English day towards students' speaking skill of the eighth graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In conducting this research, the researcher applied descriptive research. It described the influence of English Day towards students' speaking skill of the eighth graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu. Creswell (2005:145) explains "Population is a group of individuals who have the same characteristic". The researcher chose the eighth graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu as the population of her research since English Day has been applied about one year by the eighth graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu and this research was conducted to find out the influence of English day towards students' speaking skill. It consisted of five classes. Each class consisted of 28 to 33 students. In taking the subjects of research from the population, the researcher used opportunity sampling. The characteristic of this research population were homogenous.

This research employed three techniques of collecting data, namely, questionnaire, documentation, and interview. In documentation, the researcher analyzed the report score of the students from the first semester to the last semester. Documentation was focused on English subject. Study document has been applied in order to know whether students have improvement from the first semester until the last semester especially in English subject. In analyzing the data, the researcher used two kinds of analysis namely descriptive and statistical analysis. The descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data of interview while the statistical analysis was used to analyze the documentation and questionnaire.

The result of questionnaire and documentation was analyzed by using the percentage formula Sudijono (1989:79) as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = percentage

F = frequency/number of students who get difficulties in each non-linguistic factors

N = number of student

The researcher analyzed the result of interview, and compared it with the result of questionnaire. It is intended to support the result of the statistical analysis in describing the influence of English day towards students' speaking skill through the further information which will be obtained in the result of interview.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

In gathering the data, the researcher gave the interview, questionnaire, and documentation. Those instruments were given to the research sample of SMP Al-Azhar Palu especially to the eighth graders. The result of interview shows that the students joined English day activity because they wanted to improve their English ability particularly on speaking skill. The activities make them get used to speak English to any others during school environment. English day is held in three different contexts, in teaching learning process, out of classroom, and Saturday. The teacher taught the students by using English for three subjects namely English subject, social study, and Art and Culture. In addition, students communicate by using English out of classroom or in break time such as in canteen, library and teacher office, while in Saturday, students perform some performances by using English such as speech, drama, and story retelling. The result of questionnaire indicated that the students have a good perception of English day. There were 60% students who strongly agreed that English day improves their English particularly on speaking skill. In addition, by joining this activity, students' score had improved especially on English subject. There were different score between students score in the first semester and the last semester. Students' score had improved especially on English subject.

Table 1: Students' Score

No	Students	Score			
		1st Semester		2nd Semester	
		Cognitive	Psychomotor	Cognitive	Psychomotor
1	AM	3,28	3,28	3,40	3,40
2	ARM	3,32	3,52	3,32	3,84
3	ADC	3,12	3,20	3,60	3,60
4	AWU	3,60	3,60	3,84	3,64
5	AAA	3,12	3,40	3,68	3,52
6	ARR	3,00	3,08	3,52	3,44
7	ATMB	3,60	3,60	3,48	3,72
8	ASH	3,00	3,00	3,40	3,16
9	ADS	3,04	3,04	3,64	3,60
10	BRA	3,20	3,60	3,36	3,60
11	DIA	3,28	3,32	3,52	3,48
12	DNS	3,28	3,52	3,68	3,56
13	DA	3,12	3,20	3,36	3,52
14	DRW	3,00	3,20	3,52	3,20
15	GC	3,20	3,28	3,80	3,72
16	HF	3,20	3,20	3,64	3,48
17	KHS	3,68	3,60	3,72	3,72
18	KF	3,12	3,44	3,84	3,72
19	MCU	3,80	3,28	3,44	3,32
20	MGG	3,68	3,20	3,16	3,80
21	NAY	3,36	3,32	3,52	3,80
22	NSA	3,00	3,12	3,52	3,48
23	NAD	3,32	3,00	3,64	3,20
24	NAP	3,00	3,48	3,60	3,68
25	NR	3,60	3,16	3,52	3,32
26	PAO	3,52	3,00	3,00	3,40
27	PS	3,00	3,44	3,56	3,60
28	RDS	3,08	3,08	3,36	3,12
29	Rfq	3,00	3,00	3,16	3,20
30	RF	3,00	3,00	3,36	3,16
31	RAF	3,80	3,12	3,64	3,68
32	RR	3,40	3,00	3,32	3,68
33	SZQ	3,12	3,48	3,64	3,52

## DISCUSSION

In the process of conducting the research, firstly, the researcher interviewed the students in order to know the basic information about the application of English Day and their perception of this activity. In addition by giving the interview, the researcher also got the first data that can be used to analyze the influence of English day. Marzuki (1983:58) states, “Interview is a way of collecting data by questioning undertaken unilaterally by systematic and based on objective research”. The students who got the interview were 33 students. However, after analyzing the data of interview, the researcher found English day activity separating the students from formal and informal situation. Hence, the student can speak without being afraid because the activity provides an interesting way in learning English. Furthermore, the result of questionnaire indicated there were 45.45% students who agreed that English day makes fun in learning English. There were fun activities which attract the students to speak English such as games, quiz and role play. Those activities interest the students to join English day programmed because they feel fun and enjoy it during the activity. Joseph (1997:1) argues:

English day programmed is aimed to promote English speaking for purposeful communication. It was hoped that by providing a lot of fun and enjoyment, such as activities could help to sustain and increase pupil's interest in learning English.

Interest can motivate students to do something particularly in speaking. It can be built by teachers' method, facilities of learning and students' needs that make students have willingness to develop their speaking skill. Besides, there were 60% students who strongly agreed that English day improves English particularly on speaking skill and there were 51.51% students strongly agreed that English day motivates the students to speak English. It is because the activity is applied everyday in three different contexts, in teaching learning process, out of classroom, and Saturday. Those activities motivate the students to speak English. However, students' English ability had improved day by day. Motivation is an important quality that covers all aspects of teaching and learning. Alderman (1991:8) argues:

Motivated students display interest in activities, feel self-efficacious, expand effort to succeed, persist at task and typically use effective task cognitive, and self-regulatory strategies to learn. Motivated teachers feel that they can help students learn, put time into instructional planning, and work with students to help ensure learning and mastery of knowledge and skills.

In learning a certain subject, especially speaking, motivation is needed. It is one of the determinant factors that greatly affect the successfulness of the students. Gage and Berliner (1984:374) state that for the teachers, “The motivation of students is important because motivation can serve as both an objective singular and plural in itself and a means for further achievement of other educational objectives”.

The result of documentation also suggested that English day activity improved students' English ability. In the first semester there were 36.36% students who can reach the standard score of cognitive domain while in the second semester there were 81.81 % who can reach the standard score. In psychometric domain there were only 24.24% students who can reach the standard score, while in the second semester there were 63.63% who can reach the standard score.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the data of this research, the conclusion was the influence of English day can towards students' speaking skill of the eight graders of SMP Al-Azhar Palu. This can be seen from the result of interview, questionnaire and documentation. Students can speak English bravely and they have self confidence to speak to any others without being afraid. Besides, English day provides a lot of time to practice English, hence student' speaking ability had improved day by day. In addition, after the students joined English day since a year, their English score had improved from the first semester to the last semester. English day has been applied in order to improve students' speaking skill and to prepare the students to be able to communicate globally. English day is one of school activity which is held every day in SMP Al-Azhar Palu. This activity provides some interesting ways in learning English such as games, quiz, and role play. English day is held in three different contexts. They are in teaching learning process, out of classroom, and Saturday. Teachers taught the students by using English for three subjects, namely, English subject, social study and Art and Culture. However, students have to give comments and ask the questions by using English during the subjects. Besides, the activity makes the students get used to speak English out of classroom such as in canteen, teacher room, laboratories and library. Saturday is a special day to dare to speak English. In Saturday, students have to perform some performances in full of English such as singing, speech, story retelling and drama. Those activities make the students get used to speak English



to any others and to communicate by using English in school environment. Students enjoy the activity because it separated them from formal and informal situation. Hence, the students can speak English to any others without being afraid. English day activities open their mind about learning English are fun and enjoyable, and the students have big expectations towards English day for being one of their English learning media.

In order to promote the teaching quality of English, the researcher would like to share the following suggestions to those who involved in the learning and teaching process. Firstly, for teachers in improving students' speaking skill, they should make speaking English as habit. Teacher should communicate each other by using English in school environment in order to attract the students to communicate by using English because environment give a big influence for students development. In other words, teacher should create an interesting way to make students feel fun in learning English. Teacher should attract the students to speak English without worrying about making mistakes. In addition, by applying English Day, the teacher will be able to create various kinds of activity that can attract the students to speak. Secondly, for students, being able to speak English is very important. When they have ability to speak English well, it will be easy for them to continue their study and it really helps them on seeking job. Hence, if the students want to improve their speaking skill, they have to involve themselves in some English activities. Thirdly, for other researchers, the researcher expects this study can help them to find that there is an interesting way which can improve students' speaking skill namely English Day.

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